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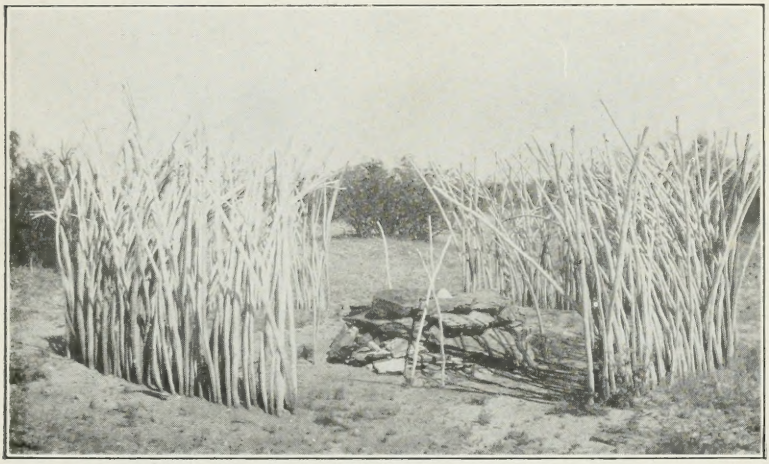
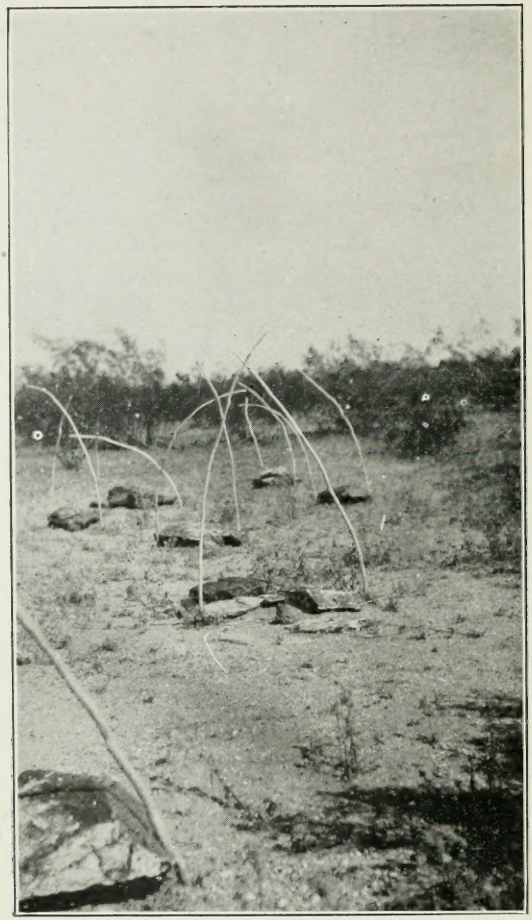


THE SHRINE OF THE CHILDREN



PRAYER STICKS ALONG THE ARROYO

THE SHRINE OF THE CHILDREN

(A Papago Folk Tale)

BY EDNA TOWNSLEY PINKLEY

Altho much has been known and written of the tribal religion and customs of the Indians of New Mexico and Northern Arizona, very little has been told concerning the Papago of Southern Arizona. This tribe is still very primitive, farming their little tracts by the most primitive methods and clinging closely to the customs of their fathers in the districts where the Government schools have not yet done their work.

An interesting survival of the pagan religion of the Papago is found near the little village of Kuatsi (Big Peak) several miles southwest of Tucson, Arizona. The "Shrine of the Children" as it is called, lies about a quarter of a mile from the village in a shallow arroyo. The shrine itself is a pile of flat stones about two feet high and four feet across. On this altar the children of the village still place their offerings; bits of shell bracelets, bright pieces of glass and pretty buttons as tributes to the deity who watches over the little ones. Surrounding this altar at a distance of about five feet is a fence of peeled ocatîlli wands three feet high interlaced to form a close hedge. This fence forms an oval with an open-

ing in each end and each side. At each side of the altar within this enclosure are two prayer sticks which carry the messages of the children to the powers above. This fence is renewed every second year and the sticks removed are corded in four neat piles just outside. These piles pay silent tribute to the antiquity of the shrine as each is approximately eight feet long and four feet high and the lower layers have crumbled to dust. On down the arroyo about twenty paces are half a dozen small piles of flat stones lying apparently at random on the ground. By each pile is a pair of prayer sticks, willow wands with turkey feathers tied at intervals.

Our guide, a half grown Papago lad, had very reluctantly consented to show us the shrine, because he knew of our personal interest in the Indians. He seemed very uneasy as we examined, erasing the marks of our camera tripod very carefully from the sand and watching the trail constantly. Suddenly he exclaimed, "We must go away from here; some one is coming and will be very angry; I see a cloud of dust." We were much interested to learn that these same words were used to friends who visited the shrine several years later.

The legend of the shrine is this; so the Papago says:—

Long, long ago, so many years ago that no one knows how long it was, a village existed here as it does today. One day at the point where the altar

now stands, there came a rumbling and a grumbling in the earth. It lasted for several days, causing much uneasiness in the village, for not even the medicine men could interpret the ominous sounds. Finally the earth opened and emitted a flow of boiling mud which slowly poured down the arroyo and threatened to engulf the village. Earnest councils were held among the chiefs. The medicine men made solemn incantations, asking of the gods the means of averting the threatened calamity. "Sacrifice the choicest flower of your tribe!" was the oracle which issued from the sacred ki. In response the best of the fruits of the harvest were thrown into the boiling stream, but no change could be noted in the ominous progress.

Another council was held and this time the finest baskets, the gayest blankets and the most curiously carved shell ornaments were offered up. There was not the slightest pause in the fatal flow! At last the medicine men brought forth from the sacred ki the word, "The fairest of all have ye held back! Bring now your most precious jewels." Slowly comprehension dawned on the chiefs and the people. The fairest! That could mean only one thing, but how could they comply with the demands of the merciless ones!

In the midst of the conclave the chief's young son stepped forth from the side of his mother with his small sister in the circle of his arm. "Why do you hesitate? Are not we of the line

of chiefs? Are we cowards? Here we are!" Slowly, relentlessly the molten mass moved on! Sadly the chiefs and the medicine men accepted the sacrifice and prepared the supreme offering. Black and yellow they painted the children and, with incantations and prayer, cast them into the relentless flood. At once it hesitated - paused - and began slowly to recede. Finally all was left in its former state with no sign on the desert to show that the surface of the ground had ever been disturbed.

With sad hearts and woeful chants the villagers built a shrine over the spot where the children were thrown into the stream and planted prayer sticks along the arroyo at the point where the flood began to recede. Still, after many centuries have elapsed, the children come to the shrine with little trinkets which look paltry to an adult but which to them are, "The choicest flowers of the tribe!"

The Casa Grande Ruins, Arizona.

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

New Building for Heye Museum

The Museum of the American Indian in New York City has filed plans for a three story brick museum and storehouse to cost $100,000.

FOR AN AMERICAN INDIAN THEATRE

By Dr. Hartley Burr Alexander of the University of Nebraska in the March Theatre Arts Monthly

To the best of my knowledge there has never been produced a really successful play or opera based upon an American Indian theme. Many have been the attempts to furbish up to the Red Man for dramatic art—authors, managers, money combining in the enterprise-but if there has been a success it has been only a *succés d'estime*, with something in it of the fictitious at that, for the roots of human understanding and feeling have never as yet been invigorated from such a source. As a matter of experience your producers look askance at any suggestion of Indian drama. "Indian stuff doesn't go," they say, speaking with experience and having in mind paint and feathers; and when their common sense and knowledge are fortified by the nose-tiltings and the superciliations of the critical highbrow (who is all for the Greek, Gothic or Chinese in art, as his case may be,) he who advocates the Indian's place under the artistic sun is left to equilibrate himself upon his own heels. As I

happen to be such an one, obstinate in face of all dismays, I shall speak for the convictions which maintain me in what I personally regard as a state of balance, making my plea for that Indian theatre which, I think, holds promise of being the truest agent for the promotion of our appreciation of what the Red Man has to bequeath unto all the arts.

I

In the long run (and art has a longer run than any playbill's day) what really tells is the essential and universal in human nature, manifested in lives that are seeking to find out how to live. This, I know, is a trite truth, but sometimes only the triteness is remembered and the truth is forgotten, and that has been our case with things Indian. For the universal is not the showy and outward, but the elemental and inward, just as when, looking into a mirror, one is brought up with a start, realizing that only a mask is reflected back and that the living reality is in another dimension of being. When we talk about elemental and essential and universal humanity, it is this other dimension that we are concerned for.

I wish to brush away one likely misapprehension. By the elemental I do not mean passions and emotions. These are no more the foundations of life than are thoughts and motions, and, indeed, they are less essential to the sort of living that simply means keeping going. But (and I

shall be venturesomely philosophical) what to me appears to be the truly humane element in man, and his one kinship with universal energy, is just his power to *withdraw* for the moment from feeling and sense in order to come back to it with his own formal modification, for expression and impression, of the sensible universe. It is his power to combine colors and tones and feelings and thoughts according to patterns which he only discovers when in part released from the mesh of outward affairs, it is this which makes of him an artist; and it is this, too, which constitutes his purest and surest appeal to the understandings of fellows gifted with a cognate power. We call this the creative instinct, and we do well to so name it, when by instinct we understand impelled participation in the active energies of our Mother World.

And now I am coming very close to my interest in the American Indian's contribution, made and making, to this vital humanity of ours. For, while it is the fact that our creative opportunities are withdrawals from the natural and social pressures of land and climate, of generation, race, tradition, it is also fact that what we withdraw with profoundly and necessarily colors what we bring back to the natural and social sun: the form of our activity and the dimension of imagination, these are universal humanity, but the languages

of art which express the universal are as many as there are habitats and families of men who have made discovery of this their humanity. And to lose from any one of them that which dear life has bought at its price, this is the most irreparable and saddening of all losses.

II

There are three, as it seems to me, sanely irrefutable reasons for pushing on in the assimilation of American Indian art.

The first has to do with the philosophy which I have just endeavored to disclose. Whenever may have been his coming, the Indian has lived long enough under his own skies to have developed into maturity modes of artistic expression that ought not to be lost and cannot again be developed. Life's chances are too few not to be all precious, and piety and curiosity alone should justify every effort to make what we can of them. Furthermore (I speak as protagonist) it happens that just that philosophy which I have propounded is famously working in Indian art. We speak of this art as symbolic, but the quality which is meant by this distorting term is just that which I have in mind when I speak of art as a language of creative life. Vastly more than for us, artistic expression has for the Indian the character of living, and in color and in song, in dance and in dramatic rite, he speaks as richly

as we with our machines—and, I sometimes think, with truer meditation.

My second reason is second only in order. It is (with bold challenge) that Indian themes are beautiful, and susceptible of being wrought to forms of beauty. Among our own ancients we accord with perfect unanimity pre-eminence in art to the Greeks; the goods show it; the Greek tradition is the near--creator of the art of Europe; all other sources combined—Semitic, Celtic, Germanic—are its far followers. But here in the New World is a source which, for variety of material and charm of motive, is quite comparable to the sources from which the Greek artists drew. This is true in mythic poetry, in decorative motive, and in melodic theme; and the materials exist not in one style but in several, each developed to a form splendidly expressive. In our own country there are no less than four great styles, each distinctive and beautiful: the Forest style, the Plains, that of the Northwest, that of the Southwest; while beyond our boundaries southward Aztec and Maya, Chibcha and Inca, afford as many more. There is here wealth not to be bought with gold, and probably never to be realized unless in our own day it be made productive.

Finally, my third. We Americans, with our transplanted culture, have achieved as yet little more than a colonial echo of the ancestral arts,

and so long as we lean heavily upon our European sources we are unlikely to more than faintly echo their forms. It is commonplace in Europe today to observe that in matters of the mind we move just about a generation behind the parent world. Now this, it appears to me, is mainly due to the fact that we have not as yet become spiritually acclimated to our new home. We live in America, but we still think European thoughts. Even nature shows herself to us in Old World colors, and the soil which supports our feet and will hold our bones is as yet in no sense our Holy and Ancient Earth. For the Indian this is not so. His race had dwelt during its formation in this, to him, old world, and all his thought, when it came to artistic expression, took on the character and substance of the forest-land and prairie-land and mesa-land, of fur and feather, of huaca and birch, and of every native image. It is his land spiritually, as it must become ours ere we may be truly naturalized, and in some such manner as it has been his. To think, then, that we shall not profit by what he has done for us is to reject long centuries of human experience, during which the soil of our land has been lovingly reclaimed unto the living substance of humanity.

These, then, are my reasons for sticking to the conviction, in spite of the fact that "Indian stuff doesn't go," that it must be made to go, and to go in the only sense in which the stuff of experience

ever does or can go, and that is by being assimilated into our central and significant expression. It is for no exotic, curious interest in paint and feathers, tomahawk and peacepipe that we should turn to the Red Man's art; nor again for no concern to enrich and enliven museums and show places; but simply and essentially for the sake of discovering, if we have it in us, the rhythms and forms, the tunes and tones of this America which we cannot make ours until we make of ourselves its natives. We cannot, of course, make ourselves over into Indians, and live the old life; that is gone for the Indian himself; and it is never desirable that mankind retrace historic steps. But we can realize that history has built up understandings here in the New as it has in the Old World, which we should be the very fools of time to dismiss without the profit of making them our own. Toward such an end I dream of an Indian theatre—a theatre for very special reasons which now I would disclose.

III

Theatre, for these reasons. Foremost, that the arts of the stage portray more nearly the center of human experience, its realized significance, than do or can the adjacent arts of music, or painting, or poetry. The very fact that it is relatively easy for your painter to capture the color and form of the Indian's outward show and for

your musician to seize by ear melodies only a fraction off the white man's pitch, this fact alone bids us beware of a too facile notion that we have caught the soul of the man in learning to appreciate what for him as for us are but forms of language. Back of, under and within all such speech, as also the speech of words, dwells the sought reality: the life that creates the color and melody and poetry. That is what we must be after if we are to seek a true naturalization, and that, to my view, is what the art of the theatre, representing as fully as art may the whole similitude of the sense and thought and passion that make up the man, is most adapted to give. If we are to understand the Red Man's art, we must understand its "innards," and that means the patterns of conduct which govern his artistic invention along with all other activities.

Such patterns are tremendously interesting with any people. They make up the real distinctiveness of human kinds and ages, of civilizations and cultures. The codes of honor and love as shown forth in chivalry, or of business, politics and sport in our own world, are examples of what I mean; and these are the natural themes of drama. So with the Indian. If we would understand his scalp-taking and horse-stealing, his ordeals by fire and by song, his talking pageantry of dress, his ghostly converse with the by him seen world of spirits, we must come to our understanding not through museums and reports, but at the last through the imaginative sympathy

which the theatre can foster. There scenic color and sound, just as in life, serve as the eloquent dress, but along with the spectacle there also is represented the action which is key at once to motive and meaning. Even Indian tales, rich in dramatic moments and dramatic portrayals, need, I should say, the aid of the theatre more than another form of literature, if but for the reason that they do not build upon a set of established images (as our traditional literature builds), and that so they demand more of the imagination than ordinarily it can yield.

But this brings me to a subtler matter. One who studies the Indian remarks very soon that his art bears to his life a very different relation from that of our art to our lives. With us the arts are enterprises among other enterprises, specialized and set apart, to be indulged in or ignored as taste and time may indicate. This is not at all the Red Man's case. All his arts are vital enterprises, and they are so intimately a part of his living that from food-getting to politics his whole society would lose (and does lose) organization without them. The only analogy in our own affairs of which I can think to make this clear is that of the Church. What, indeed, is the Church except the language of our religious life? Ecclesiastical music and fine art, the red-letter calendar of its festivals, its rites, its theologies and creeds, all these center in a dramatic expres-

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sion, which as nearly as an expression can, shows forth the religious life. The Indian's ritual is similarly for him the expression of his central nature. His songs are moments of action: war-making, love-making, crop-raising; his dress is a public proclamation or petition; and his dance is a very potent "medicine" by means of which he makes for himself a hale place in the midst of a somewhat immedicated Nature. Art under such circumstances is serious business, and it cannot be comprehended if taken piecemeal. Suppose, for example, one were to undertake to expound the Church either by its music or its theology, neither the one nor the other could give it more than a fantastic meaning. So it is with the Indian, for even his myths are intelligible only

when they are understood for what they are: the scenarios and exegetics of his ritual life.

The dramatic element, then, the theatre, is at the center, the one lead that can most probably bring us to home terms with Indian culture. Of course there is a qualification, and that is that the theatre can only give for us a conscious interpretation of what for the Indian was simple and instinctive living. This is true; if we are to have an Indian theatre, it must build up a genuinely theatrical art of imitation, deliberately interpreting, with modification of mode and substance, what in its origins was firsthand experience of the world. But is this a calamity? It is exactly what Greek tragedy did with the old instinctive ritual life of the Greeks, and in doing so set off the cultural development of Europe. It is not different from the growth of modern painting out of the altar-piece art of the Church, or from that of the rise of the modern stage from the older Miracles and Mysteries. Certainly it is all that we can do, and it is my own notion that such a theatre as I have in mind is almost the sole source to which the children of the Red Man may themselves look for the perpetuation of the thought-life of their fathers. For the modern Indian, too, has reached his stage of self-consciousness toward his own art, which means for him either that he must abandon it (as, alas, too many are doing!) or carry it forward for the sake

of what it may yet add to the artistic spirit of a world grown aware of its artistic spirit.

IV

But a theatre is more than a name, more perhaps than a founded institution, with all the apparatus of direction and production. Certainly in the sense in which I am thinking my American Indian theatre it signifies a very definite working out of a dramatic idea—analogous in its way to what Wagner did for opera at Bayreuth. It signifies the creation of a body of plays and the education of a corps of actors all for the sake of discovering the form of dramatic communication which will at the last approve itself as the proper vehicle for the Indian spirit, and in so doing will add its own gift to the arts of mankind.

For to me it appears very certain that in all the elements of drama new forms must be discovered if the Indian is to be effectively imaged forth. This is not for the sake of being novel and certainly from no affectation of exoticism; but simply and reasonably because of the fact that "Indian stuff" doesn't go and will not go until it somehow gets into it the formative spirit which is the Indian's; the traditional Old World forms are but so many added obstacles, for the very reason that they build up a definite series of Old World expectancies—so that your Indian

opera, for example, might be Italian with a change of costume. Each of the elements of play-construction must be refashioned to suit the new substance if our Indian theatre is to be real; and since I have more or less seated ideas as to the forms toward which these elements should be moulded, I shall take them up in their Aristotelian count—spectacle, music, dance, diction, action, thought—turn by turn.

First, spectacle. To some this has seemed the whole trick. Moccasins, a fringed shirt, a feather bonnet, and the thing's done. But there is no such simplicity for those who realize that (as I have said above) for the Indian forms and colors talk. It is doubtful if there ever was a people who carried color symbolism so far and with less of the arbitrary about it. Whether or no the Zuñi have, as Carlos Troyer has suggested, a color notation for the songs, fact it is that virtually all Indians possess a sensitive certainty that color is an intrinsic language of Nature; in a very curious and charming mode the world is for the Red Man's imagination a prismatic phantasmagoria, and it would be to miss the first point of his communication to fail to take account of this in the interpretation of his thought. Furthermore, I know of no study, having an outdoor flavor, that is quite so fascinating as the effort to see Indian art-forms in the Nature which has stimulated them. Whether on the rolling and tinted prai-

ries, in the vivid Southwest, or where forest and mountain, ice and sea give sombrely the character of the Northwest, out of each comes a set in which the play of life is enacted, and to which its dramatic imitation must be trued. For the practical problem of the simpler stage, I think the matter is primarily one of color, if one will include in this not only light, but the variegation of pattern which lights and darks put sharply together may produce. The outdoorness of it, in the native kind of an outdoors, is the atmospheric tone which we must catch in our spectacle—remembering that we deal with an outdoors painted by Indian mythic imagination and not by white men's nature textbooks.

Concerning the music there is perhaps something less to say, since the thing is better understood. The sources are simple in kind—a melodic idiom which is distinctive enough, but is also so appealing that it has caught the imagination of many composers, and along with the melody a really astonishing development of rhythmic pattern. Actually our composers have rarely used Indian melodies except in Europeanized forms, treating them simply as themes and dressing them out in romantic atmospheres: so that a start is yet to make in the creation of an art type for Indian modes. Perhaps the best yet done, in the field of song, is the work of Derrick Lehmer with Miwok materials, where the flute is woven in

and about the voice and the chord accompaniment gives the rhythmic pattern, echoing, as it were, the native drum. It is the drum, after all, that gives the tonal foundation to Indian music, and it has long appeared to me that a new orchestra might be created where the tympani, in whole-tone scale units, and the wood-wind might be so brought into the fore as to give to us something of the effect which the Indian's music has for himself. In drama, too, a more liberal use of music is almost inevitable in handling Indian themes; such an essential role is that which song plays in the native thought; and one of the surest agents for securing that aesthetic displacement, that removal of the whole sensibility into a second dimension, which is begun by the proscenium arch, is the rhythm of the drum. The Indian employs the drum for just this purpose in his own ritual life, and it is wholly in keeping that the same means should be used to bring about our participation in his moods. The drum, or its rhythms, is the ruler of the magic which is to transport us imaginatively into that other world.

But it is in the third element, the dance, that the most significant clues, both for drama and opera, are to be found. The Indian dance is neither exercise nor spectacle; it is action, dramatic action. Usually it is only one phase, and that commonly a public phase, of a ritual built up with many episodes upon some mythic schema,

some program which when turned into a verbal story we call its myth. In actual rites the acting has little that is external about it; it is "medicine," it is life; and it might be death, too, for more than one protagonist has died under the tortures self-sustained of the dramatic center of the old-time Sun Dance. Certainly for a theatric art that is to be built up on the basis of the ancient rites and myths the dance is all-important. In drama it should govern the moving spectacle, where each action and mode of the actors should follow the measures and tempos of the rhythmic foundation, stylized, as it were, to some tonal base which keys the whole performance (and which is to be reinforced by the subtle aid of an appropriate color-tone). In opera—here, it seems to me, is the sought-for opporunity for a great step. In spite of everything, opera has hardly yet fully succeeded in finding itself, although it has developed certain types: *I Pagliacci* comes nearest, I think, to conveying the true effect of that Greek tragedy of which Italian opera was in its inception an imitation; *Parsifal* is the most convincing of the cycle which would restore to us by the agency of tonal atmosphere the glamor of Mediaeval faith and miracle, and in Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* drama has been given its perfect accompaniment of musical reflection. But, climacteric as they are, none of these has as yet hit off what opera should do

with the most important of its resources, and we must still turn to the *Prometheus* or the *Persians* of Aeschylus to see the chorus truly in action. Now, it is just here that the Indian rituals are most inviting; for the one thing they do show more than all other is the chorus at the very center of the action. The very thing out of which Greek drama grew when Aeschylus added his second actor is presented in full play in the splendid tribal rituals which fairly implore an operatic fulfillment; for there are a dozen Indian rituals, dramatic and beautiful, which need little more than transcription and harmonization in order to create at once a New World opera far more Greek in quality than any which the Old-World imitators of the classic tradition have succeeded in finding out.*

V

With Aristotle we may place speech, action and thought in a group apart, since they are really concerned less with the manner than with the substance of the play. Something manneristic must, to be sure, be said anent diction, since the forms of poetry are so intimate a feature of stage tradition. First, the kind of language. "Pidgin English," or anything resembling it, is

*Neihardt's *Song of the Indian Wars* is a case in point. There the theme is precisely the conflict of the two races, and it is proper enough to set it to the most conventional of our meters.

out of place except where the point is to represent the contact of Indian and white. This is a legitimate enough field, but one may doubt whether it is the best approach to that understanding of which we are in quest. The minglings of races generate a riot of miscomprehensions, and to get the better meaning out of the sad story of the white man's long warfares (military and commercial) with the native tribes, the events must fall, I suspect, under the shadowing, and thereby revealing hand of time. Certainly the Indian who greets with "How" is at one with the cigar-store effigy, and should be dropped into the like oblivion. Our real problem is a simple and dignified English which shall bear, as nearly as it may, no more than the color of those experiences which we and the Red Man alike share because of our common humanity, and this means that it should have the simple directness of childlike and dignity of Biblical speech.

One need only turn to the rhymed and metered "Indian legends" done in verse a fifty-year gone to realize (with sinking fullness) the perils which beset the attempt to do over Indian themes into white measures. I do not say that the thing cannot be done, though I know of no case where it has been done except where the white-man-red-man inter-contact is the theme, and there it is

legitimate.* Longfellow's fair success with *Hiawatha* is certainly due to the fact that he chose the relatively unfamiliar and primitive *Kalevala* rhythm. But, as a rule, it is much better to adopt free verse for Indian themes, trusting that time, and the seasoning study of the native rhythms, will bring up into our consciousness a true poetic form. Certain elements of this form can, I think, be readily forecasted: that of phrase repetition, which, in the native tongues, is carried to monotony, and that of the descending cadence so characteristic of Indian melody. For the rest, free verse is pliable, and it leaves the way open for that surprise into which we must all be trapped before we can truly enter with interest the portals of another's mind.

Action and thought, of which speech is the vehicle, may here, I think, be taken as one. Their substance is to be found in the rich volume of Indian myths and rites which have been studied and reported or which still (by the good fortune of the Indian's malassimilation) live in the native rituals; and their significance is to be discovered in those patterns of life which, as I have suggested, give meaning to all artistic invention.

*To the best of my knowledge the only thing that has been attempted in this form is my own version of an Omaha ritual with music by Henry Purmort Eames, which was presented as a feature of the Pageant of Lincoln in 1916. Orchestral selections from the music and some of the chorals have been given in concert in New York and Chicago.

Back of a body of customs there is always an implicit philosophy of life, and it is just the discovery and exposition of this philosophy which the arts, and most of all that of the theatre, may effectually accomplish. In case of the Indian this means necessarily minute and long-continued study, quite the more difficult because of his reclusiveness, and none the easier because his mode of expression is to himself aesthetic and complex: a philosophy of life is not to be rendered in mere terms of anthropology, nor in any verbal exposition. The anthropology is an invaluable aid, but along with it must go first-hand impressions and that sympathy of the imagination which blots out for the moment the intervals that lie between differing natures. I know that this is vastly difficult—but suppose that in our own day we were to land on Martian plains, and finding there a race akin to ours, which during long ages of isolation had built up its own understanding of this our universe, should we deem it less than the most fascinating of problems to come to terms of communication with these Martians and to read into our own lives their discoveries? Exactly this happened when the New World was discovered by Europe, excepting that the problem is yet to solve and the reading yet to make. When done, we shall find in the Indian's patterns of life a philosophy richly and dramatically human, for the conquest of which, into our understand-

ing, future generations will rise up to call us blessed.

I have spoken of the elements and I have attempted to lay a foundation in theory for what in practice may be done toward an Indian theatre. For the full realization many things are necessary. First, I suppose, a willingness on our part to devote lifetime hours—yes, our veriest lives—to the study of something that "doesn't go" or, if it may meet with a moment's attention, is taken mainly in sport or as ornamental pastime. It took some twenty years, as I seem to recall, for Wagner to attune European ears to Europe's own Mediaeval mind, and the problem here set is far more difficult—that of attuning our own to the mind of an alien and ancient race, born and formed in a remote habitation. But in the end the thing can be done, though I suppose that that end might be brought nearer in time and made more certain of achievement if some King of Bavaria or a Maecenas gifted with understanding of the thing were to provide for its material sustenance during the inevitable period of trial and error.

IN THE FIELD

Horticulture in Ancient Mexico

Not only the gardens of Montezuma, but the

picture writing of his subjects prove the ancient Mexicans to have been great horticulturists. Their descendants still use their complex system of botanical names, a system which conveys information as to qualities, characteristics and habitat of many plants. Wilson Popenoe, formerly of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and at one time in Santa Fe, in a paper on "Plants of Aztec Picture Writing" gives a long list of botanical figures used in Aztecan hieroglyphics. The flower symbol recurs constantly in all sorts of combinations as a place name. Maize, an important feature in all Indian life, appears frequently along with the sweet potato, the black bean, the cherry, plum, avocado and various less known native fruits. Most interesting is a combination of the water sign with the conventionalized sign for cultivated ground meaning "place where the land is irrigated." The familiar desert features, the yucca, the cactus and the mesquite, are all represented, but the gem of Mr. Popenoe's collection is the picture symbol which directly translated means "flea pepper," a fitting name for the biting, red hot pepper of the southwest. The floating gardens of Mexico City, so famous during the conquest, may still be considered one of the best expressions of the native horticultural art. Willow trees are planted in the shallow water of Lake Xochinilcho in plots varying from 200 to 2,000 square feet.

Their interlacing roots form a sort of basketwork that holds the soil with which the plots are filled while their tops are kept pruned so as not to shade too heavily the plants cultivated on the islands. The inhabitants of Mexico City are supplied to this day with vegetables, corn and flowers raised on these esthetic truck farms. —Science Service.

Smithsonian Expedition

The Smithsonian Institution this month sent to Africa an expedition under the leadership of Dr. William M. Mann. The objective will be Tanganyika Territory in British East Africa. From there the expedition will proceed to Dar-es-Salem and make camp for half a year. Wild animals will be trapped and it is hoped to secure at least a hundred specimens of animals for the Washington Zoo that have been never before represented in the Zoological Park. Walter P. Chrysler of New York co-operates in financing the expedition. The personnel besides Dr. Mann will include Albert J. Loveridge of Harvard, Stephen Haweis, F. G. Carnachan, Charles Charleton and Frank Lowe.

Ten Months Fishing Trip

As the result of a ten months fishing trip on Lake Nyasa, Dr. Cuthbert Christy is taking 5000 specimens of fish, including many new species, from East Africa to England.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

Bequests to Metropolitan

The February issue of the Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum in addition to announcing the munificent bequests of Frank A. Munsey which some believe will run up to Forty Million Dollars, announces a bequest of Five Thousand Dollars by William P. Wainwright.

Gifts for Johns Hopkins

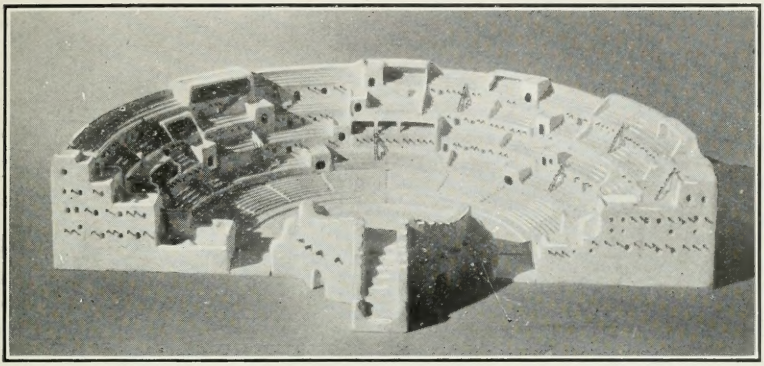
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Walters have given $100,000 and R. Brent Keyser another $100,000 toward the Semi-Centennial endowment campaign of Johns Hopkins University. It is expected to raise $1,500,000 in Maryland.

Larkin Foundation

The late John D. Larkin bequeathed $100,000 to the University of Buffalo to be added to the fund of $250,000 he had provided during his life time for a Larkin Foundation.

Laboratory Gift Increased

Mrs. Frank R. Lillie has added $4,000 to the $90,000 already given by herself and husband to the University of Chicago for the Whitman Laboratory.



Designed by Rafael Yela Gunther.

MODEL OF INDIAN THEATRE IN MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO AT SANTA FE, N. M.

"Designed for the School of American Research at Santa Fé, New Mexico, this model for an Indian Theatre retains the typical Pueblo architecture of the American Southwest, yet at the same time suggests an interesting and thoroughly practical variation of the Dionysiac Theatre of the ancient Greeks. It has been chosen by Hartley Alexander to illustrate the possibilities of a theatre for the American Indian. Especially suggestive are the various exits and entrances to the stage, which is capable of extension into the auditorium. Attractive lodge-like shelters from the blazing desert sun awakens in the imagination the picture of an audience no less colorful than the pageantry this theatre invites."—Theatre Arts Monthly for March, 1926.

CEREMONY OF THE GREEN CORN AT COCHITI

Vivid dramatic contrasts, vigorous primitive pantomime, lighting effects created by the relentless sun of the Southwest, all make the Green Corn Dance of the Pueblo of Cochiti a native ceremony never to be forgotten by visitors to New Mexico. It is performed in the plaza of the pueblo, and it is typical of a vast treasury of native folk-art indigenous to our country. In the opinion of Hartley Alexander and other advocates of Indian culture, such ceremonials should serve as the basic materials for future achievement.—Theatre Arts Magazine for March, 1926.